

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161561
Inspection date	16 October 2007
Inspector	Rachel Edwards
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 2001. She lives with her partner and two children aged nine and six in a house in Ludgershall, Wiltshire. The whole of the home is registered for childminding and there is an enclosed garden for outdoor play. The family have a dog and cat.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of five children at any one time unless working with an assistant and then may care for up to eight children. In addition she may care for one child over night. There are currently six children on roll. The childminder is able to walk and drive children to local schools and pre-schools. The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment, where toys and equipment are well maintained. Children learn the importance of cleaning hands before eating and after using the toilet and from a young age they are encouraged to manage this independently. Food is stored and

prepared hygienically. She makes sure parents know that she cannot care for sick children. The childminder does not however, consistently follow good hygienic procedures to prevent cross infection. For example, she uses a towel to change children's nappies on, which cannot be cleaned between children and she does not always use a sheet for children sleeping in the cot, so that children are not always sleeping on a clean surface. She does not consistently wash her hands and dispose of tissues after wiping children's noses and animal feed bowls are left within children's reach.

Children benefit from the range of healthy snacks that the childminder provides. She encourages them to try new tastes and helps them learn about healthy eating. Children bring packed lunches which are appropriately stored. All meals are eaten together at the table. The relaxed environment encourages children to eat well and to learn social skills. Children are able to help themselves to drinks when they choose.

Children are physically active each day. They enjoy bouncing on the trampoline and playing in the garden. They frequently go for walks, which are made more enjoyable, for example, by collecting leaves and cones to use in art and craft activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally safe home, where the childminder has identified most hazards and taken steps to reduce the risk to children. For example, she uses safety gates to prevent young children reaching the stairs or front door. All sharp objects and toxic substances are safely locked away or out of children's reach. The childminder takes sensible precautions to ensure children are not at risk from the friendly family dog. However, there is a low cupboard that the childminder cannot confirm has safety glass in the doors, which could cause serious injury.

Children use and play with good quality toys and equipment that are suitable for their ages. When transporting children in the car, the childminder ensures they are using seats and restraints appropriate to their age and size. On outings, the children wear specially printed shirts, so they are easy to see and giving contact details in the unlikely event that they get lost. Children enjoy using the trampoline, for which parents have given consent. However, the childminder does not follow manufacturer's guidance for its safe use, which increases the risk of accidents. Children learn about safety in many ways, for example, helping to tidy away toys that cause a trip hazard. Recently the childminder organised a visit from the Fire Safety Officer, who talked to children after they had enjoyed trying on his uniform and climbing in the fire engine.

The childminder has a good understanding of safeguarding children and she has recently attended training on child protection. She informs parents of her responsibilities and would be able to act in a child's best interests if she had concerns for their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the time they spend with the childminder. She plans many interesting activities and frequent outings that add interest to the children's day. The childminder has organised her home very well with toys stored so that children can choose what they want to play with. This helps children become more independent and follow their own interests. For example, a child is totally absorbed choosing and doing puzzles of increasing difficulty. The childminder

is skilled at adapting activities so that children of all ages and abilities are included. She develops children's early communication skills effectively. Children are encouraged to talk about what they are doing and the childminder models this well herself. They enjoy sharing stories and singing songs.

The childminder takes every opportunity to help children learn, for example, they count how many sheep in the picture and use language to compare, such as bigger and smaller. They talk about their feelings looking at happy and sad pictures and become aware of others' needs, for example, learning to share and take turns. Older children are given time to relax after busy days at school, for example, by watching television for a short while or doing art and craft activities before going outside to play.

The childminder plans many exciting outings. Her assistant usually accompanies her for these, so that he can help with supervising the children. Recently they have enjoyed trips to Legoland, an adventure trail and a monkey sanctuary, as well as toddler groups, walks in the woods, the fire station and the shops.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcome in this homely setting. The childminder spends time talking with parents to ensure she can meet children's individual needs and follow parents' wishes in the care she provides. She gives children a great deal of individual attention and fully involves all ages in the activities she provides, so that children feel settled and confident and demonstrate a sense of belonging. Children learn to socialise with others as they visit local toddler groups and shops. They become aware of the wider world as they play with resources that reflect positive images of diversity, such as other cultures and abilities, for example, watching Spanish language DVDs and tasting different foods.

Children behave very well. The childminder gives young children excellent support as they learn to play co-operatively with others. For example, a child beams when praised for sharing colouring pens. They are encouraged to be polite and considerate of others and they willingly help with tasks such as tidying away toys.

The childminder keeps parents very well informed about the care she provides. She gives parents copies of her policies and procedures and has written agreements with all parents. She offers written daily diaries for all children to give parents clear information about how their child has been, sleep, toilet and feed times. She has not however clearly informed parents about her arrangements for children to use the trampoline.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Generally the childminder has organised her home well to meet the needs of the children she cares for. She has not however taken steps to minimise all hazards to children and does not consistently follow hygienic practices. She sometimes works with her partner who acts as her assistant. She has ensured that any adults in the household have undergone the relevant checks. She makes sure that she keeps within her registered numbers of children when working on her own and with her assistant. She has a strong commitment to continuing to improve the quality of care she provides. For example, she seeks advice from early years professionals and regularly attends relevant training. Her assistant is planning to undertake the training and registration

to become a childminder in his own right. Parents have given written permission for the assistant to have occasional sole care of the children but the childminder does not record when this happens as is required.

Most of the records, policies and procedures are in place, which are needed to promote children's welfare. Paperwork is regularly updated, stored confidentially and is available for inspection. The childminder meets the needs of the range of children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, several recommendations were made to improve the standard of care. These related to documentation, smoke detectors and resources to promote diversity. All these issues have been successfully addressed. Children's attendance is now accurately recorded and appropriate car insurance is in place. Children's safety is improved by having working smoke detectors on each level of the house. Children learn to value similarities and differences between themselves and others by playing with a wider range of resources that reflect diversity in their own community and the wider world.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted received one complaint that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 1 - Suitable Person and was regarding an unvetted adult being left alone with minded children. An unannounced visit was conducted and evidence was found that the National Standards were not being met. As a result of this visit two actions were set under National Standard 1 and National Standard 2 - Organisation.

Ofsted received a satisfactory response from the childminder to confirm that the National Standards were being met. The childminder remains qualified for registration.

The childminder is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure there is a daily record of who is looking after the children
- take steps to reduce the spread of infection by following hygienic practices when changing nappies, wiping children's noses, using clean sheets in the cot and by making animal feed bowls inaccessible to children

- improve safety by ensuring low level glass is not a hazard to children and following manufacturer's guidance when using the trampoline and informing parents of how it is used

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk